

Us,” which successfully organized the campaign to defeat an “English-Only” ballot initiative in Nashville, and of Healthy and Free Tennessee, a statewide coalition focusing on promoting reproductive and sexual health. She also serves on the Advisory Board of the Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition, the Steering Committee of the American Constitution Society—Nashville Chapter, and the Steering Committee of Our Muslim Neighbors. Ms. Weinberg is a graduate of Grinnell College and received her master’s degree from the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago. Ms. Weinberg has done so much to advance civil liberties in Tennessee and her service has been invaluable. I am proud to call her my friend and wish her every happiness in retirement.

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CELEBRATING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF MAYOR BOBBIE SINGH-ALLEN

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**HON. AMI BERA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 30, 2022*

Mr. BERA. Madam Speaker, I rise today during Women’s History Month to recognize the contributions and achievements of Mayor Bobbie Singh-Allen of Elk Grove, California.

Mayor Singh-Allen has been a great friend and partner in public service for years, when we began working together when she joined the Elk Grove School Board. She has been an exemplary citizen of Elk Grove, a city I have had the honor of representing throughout my time in Congress. She has lived in Elk Grove for over 30 years and been a strong leader in strengthening our public schools.

She was appointed to the Elk Grove Unified School District Board of Trustees in 2012 and went on to serve as Board President for 2 years. Her work involved maintaining strong financial reserves, supporting robust career and technical education programs, increasing graduation rates, creating a more inclusive curriculum, and enhancing visual and performing arts.

Mayor Singh-Allen is also an accomplished attorney, a graduate of Lincoln Law School of Sacramento, and represented the private sector for over twenty years. She has worked with associations representing the hospitality industry, special educators, and affordable housing issues.

Her election made her the first directly-elected Sikh-American woman mayor in the country. Mayor Singh-Allen is not only a dedicated servant of Elk Grove and Sacramento County, but she is also a wonderful wife and mother. In 2015, she was selected as “Woman of the Year” for California State Assembly District 9 and was recognized for her achievements in front of the California State Legislature. I am honored to call her a friend and ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing her today in front of the U.S. House of Representatives.

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF  
GERARD “GERRY” M. THIERS

**HON. ANDY KIM**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 30, 2022*

Mr. KIM of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the retirement of Gerard “Gerry” M. Thiers, a non-profit leader and champion for private special education in New Jersey for over three decades.

Gerry has dedicated his life and career to champion policies that benefit children in New Jersey. He began his career researching for the United Way in Philadelphia while also representing Catholic Charities agencies for the New Jersey Catholic Conference and assisting with the management of a large social services agency. After developing a robust advocacy background, Gerry proudly served as the Executive Director of the Association of Schools and Agencies for the Handicapped (ASAH) for 38 years. Under his leadership, ASAH’s membership increased from 25 to 95 schools at more than 140 locations across our state. Through his work, he not only supported thousands of educational professionals through development conferences and programming opportunities, but also ensured that children in New Jersey had the resources they needed in quality education to reach their fullest potential.

Gerry led a successful effort to implement a new funding system for private special education schools. With more than 232,500 students receiving special education instruction in the state during the year 2020, this has benefited New Jersey’s special needs students’ accessibility to a meaningful, accommodating education. He also helped start “Special Education Week” in New Jersey, which commends school board members, educators, and parents for their dedication to ensuring quality education for students with disabilities and most importantly, to recognize the hard work of the students themselves.

In addition to his work with ASAH, Gerry also served as Chairperson of the New York Society of Association Executives, Chair of the Advocates for Children of New Jersey in Newark, and was a Board member for the National Association of Private Special Education Centers in Washington, D.C. Through these numerous volunteer roles, Gerry earned respect and a prominent reputation as a non-profit leader on both state and national levels.

I know I speak for the 3rd District in wishing Gerry a happy retirement filled with days of doing what he loves—biking, golfing and reading. He can retire knowing that his life’s work will not go unnoticed by our community, filled with the students, teachers, and parents of those impacted by a disability. It is because of Gerry that New Jersey can continue to pride itself on providing one of the highest quality educations through destigmatizing best practices that continue normalizing special education programs students deserve. New Jersey is grateful for the work that he has done, and I hope that he can inspire others to carry on his legacy as a champion for special education students across the country.

HONORING THE LIFE AND PATRIOTIC SERVICE OF THOMAS E. COPPINGER

**HON. PAT FALLON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 30, 2022*

Mr. FALLON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and commemorate the life and service of Thomas Edwin Coppinger. Thomas honorably served in the United States Marine Corps during the Second World War and the United States Army during the Korean War. Today, he is survived by his brother Don Coppinger, his sisters Sandra Tate and Sharon Reilly, and many more nieces, nephews, and cousins. All of whom carry on the memory of this great American hero.

Thomas was born on March 22, 1922, in Greenville, TX to Thomas ‘Tom’ Richard and Eula Belle Coppinger. He attended high school in Greenville and worked on his grandparents’ farm and as a delivery man. Ultimately, in April of 1941 at the young age of nineteen, Thomas decided to enlist in the Marine Corps to serve his country in the Second World War. He saw combat during his missions in the Pacific theatre from early 1942 to 1944. Moreover, he served in Samoa, Hawaii, and the Gilbert Islands and was honorably discharged in December 1945. After returning home to Texas, Thomas again heeded the call for duty and reenlisted into the United States Army in 1948, where he valiantly served in the Second Armored Division to defend our Nation and allies. On September 1, 1950, Thomas tragically lost his life on a combat mission in Korea, and he posthumously received the Purple Heart for his service and bravery.

On July 27, 1951, Thomas Edwin Coppinger was laid to rest with full military honors in Wieland Cemetery, Greenville, TX. At the time of his death, Thomas was survived by his parents and 12 siblings. On March 22, 2022, we celebrate what would have been Thomas’ 100th Birthday. I pray that the memory of this patriot will live on for yet another hundred years and beyond.

I have requested the United States flag be flown over our Nation’s Capital to recognize Thomas Coppinger’s patriotism and devotion to God, Family, and Country. Furthermore, Madam Speaker, I extend my personal condolences to the Coppinger family for the loss of such an extraordinary man of service and duty. May God rest the soul of this great American.

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TRIBUTE TO CELESTE DE LAINE  
“CLETE” BOYKIN

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**HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 30, 2022*

Mr. CLYBURN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a trailblazer, a role model for many, and a strong advocate for her alma mater, Clemson University. Celeste De Laine Boykin, known to her friends and associates affectionately as “Clete,” is being honored by the Clemson Alumni Association with the Distinguished Service Award, and I echo their recognition of her tremendous work.